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MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

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FM Gul: CIA did not Interrogate Anyone in Turkey - Milliyet
CIA Director Arrives in Ankara with 22 Agents - Hurriyet
What is the Reason for FBI and CIA Visits to Turkey? - Vatan
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FM Gul denies all Allegations over CIA Planes - Turkiye
Rice Praises US Middle East Policy - Turkiye
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PKK Bargaining with the CIA - Hurriyet (12/11)
Land Forces Commander Buyukanit Leaves for the US - Hurriyet
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Some Turkish Companies are on the FBI's Black List - Sabah
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Talabani: "No Single Party can Win the Elections" - Zaman
CIA Director Arrives in Turkey - Radikal

Orhan Pamuk Trial is on Friday - Radikal
PM Erdogan: Religion is Our Cement, not an Upper Identity
for Turkish Citizens" - Radikal
Iran Invites US to Bid for the Nuclear Energy Power Plant -
Yeni Safak
FBI Chief Visits National Intelligence Organization (MIT) -
Radikal (12/10)
PKK Summit with the FBI Director - Zaman (12/10)
US-Turkey Cooperation for PKK will Continue - Yeni Safak
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BRIEFING

CIA Director Goss Comes to Turkey: All papers and TV channels cover the visits of CIA Director Goss and FBI Director Mueller extensively with Sunday's "Hurriyet" giving front page placement to the story. Saturday's "Zaman" reported that Director Mueller said that his visit was a step in boosting the partnership and cooperation between the US and Turkey. He added that cooperation between the two countries would help speed progress in the fight against terror organizations like Al-Qaeda and PKK. Sunday's "Hurriyet" says that the visits of the two intelligence directors following directly after new US Ambassador Ross Wilson's arrival and comments on PKK caused speculation in Ankara official circles in that Washington might launch a serious initiative against the PKK after the Iraqi elections. Although the schedule of Goss was kept big secret, it was reported that he would meet with Prime

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Minister Erdogan, TGS (military) and MIT (intelligence) officials. "Sabah" reports that Al-Qaeda and PKK will be on the top of Goss' agenda and that Director Goss would ask Turkish officials to inform the CIA if there was any

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captured Al-Qaeda militants. Turkey would also be asked to freeze the assets of Turkish companies extending financial support to terror organizations like Al-Qaeda. "Sabah" adds that in return, the Turkish side would ask for the US to take concrete steps against the PKK. "Milliyet" says that the visits of the FBI and CIA directors had been arranged at the request of the new US Ambassador Ross Wilson. "Cumhuriyet" reports that there are 165 FBI agents working in Turkey.

Foreign Minister Gul on Spy Planes in Turkey: "Milliyet" reports on Foreign Minister Gul's comments on CIA's torture planes. Gul rejected the allegations that a CIA plane landed in Turkey to interrogate the prisoners, saying that a proper request was made to land for refueling and servicing and that request was granted. "Posta" says that Gul admitted that a CIA plane landed at Istanbul's Sabiha Gokcen airport, however no interrogation took place.

US Gives Two Messages to the EU: "Zaman" gives front page coverage to Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Bryza's remarks. Bryza reportedly gave two important messages to the EU in Brussels, saying that 'the EU should step up its struggle against PKK and should bring the PKK militants captured in Europe to justice'. Bryza added that Turkey's EU accession should not be linked with the Cyprus issue.

Israel Plans to Attack Iran; Iran Energy: "Sabah" says that following Iran President Ahmedinejad's comments that Israel should be moved to Europe, tension between Iran and Israel escalated. "Sabah" reports that Britain's 'Sunday Times' cited Israeli military sources as saying that Prime Minister Sharon has ordered his military forces to attack Iran in March 2006. "Posta" says Israel denied such allegations. Regarding US-Iran relations, "Yeni Safak" reported on Iran's invitation to US to bid for its nuclear energy power plant construction.

Europe Watches Two Law Suits in Turkey: "Aksam" reports that the EU is closely following two critical law suits due to open this week in Turkey. University rector Yucel Askin's trial will begin Tuesday, December 13 and author Orhan Pamuk trial begins on Friday, December 16. "Aksam" quotes the "Financial Times:" "On Friday not only Orhan Pamuk but also Turkey will face justice."

EDITORIAL OPINION: CIA Director in Turkey/US-Turkey Relations

"Important Developments Regarding US-Turkey Relations" Semih Idiz observed in the mainstream "Milliyet" (12/12): "No expertise is required to see that something important is going on as the visit of the FBI Director is followed by that of the CIA Director. All of this indicates a comprehensive dialogue with Turkey. The agenda for these meetings is not hard to guess: Iraq on the eve of elections, the PKK in northern Iraq, recent troubling remarks by the Iranian president and Syria. On the other hand, the CIA torture planes will not be a main topic of discussion. The immediate appointment for credentialing given to the new US Ambassador Ross Wilson is also a sign of good coordination between Turkey and the US. These developments require Wilson to be present in Ankara. The developments are obviously Iraq-related. A behind-the-scenes diplomatic success was recently achieved when Turkey managed to bring Americans and Iraqi Sunnis together. On the PKK issue, it is still unclear what kind of cooperation is in place. According to American sources, some developments are due.

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If that is the case we should expect to see some indications soon. Otherwise, as the Washington Institute's recent report concluded, the PKK issue will continue to poison Turkish-American ties. It seems the US has reached a better understanding on this matter and has started listening to Turkey's views on Iraq more often."

"What is the reason for the FBI and CIA Visits?" Rusen Cakir argued in the mass appeal "Vatan" (12/12): "First FBI Director Mueller came to Ankara, and now CIA Director Porter Goss is visiting Turkey. The FBI and CIA visits should not be seen only in terms of the 'PKK dimension.' There certainly will be some promises regarding the PKK issue but there will be some demands as well. Traditionally speaking, neither the FBI nor the CIA gives anything without taking something in return. Therefore Turkey should be careful of the demands. In the past, the CIA captured PKK leader Ocalan and handed him over to Turkey. Today the power of the CIA is strong enough to root out the PKK in Iraq if it really wants to. But it still seems like a remote possibility. On this issue the prevailing view is that catching a few PKK chieftains will not help achieve a solution. Along with the Goss visit, the recent changes in Turkey's Iraq policy and the internal debate over Turkish and Kurdish identity indicate that Turkey has changed a lot. Given the situation, we might expect to see a couple of anti-PKK operations designed to win over the public but we might also see certain radical steps toward the settlement of the Kurdish issue as well.

WILSON